

SECTION 2 Questions 15–27

Read the text below and answer Questions 15–21.

How to prepare for an interview

Why prepare?

There are three main reasons.

- One:** Although you can't guess every question you might be asked, if you are prepared you can tailor your answers to fit.
- Two:** If you're well prepared, you will have more confidence and this will affect the way you come across.
- Three:** Attitude matters. Prospective employers will choose a not-quite-perfect but willing candidate over a brilliant one who obviously isn't bothered.

What to prepare?

Find out about the organisation

- Visit the website and read any materials that you have been sent. If nothing has been sent, phone the company to ask for any reading matter they may have.
- Talk to anyone you know who works there already.

Find out about the job

- Ask for a job description or specification. This will tell you the duties that go with the job.
- Talk to anyone you know who is familiar with the work you may be doing.

Find out what the employer is looking for

- Make a list of the skills specified in the job advertisement.
- Think of examples to back up claims that you have these skills.

You can then answer most of the questions that will come up, such as 'Tell me more about how you work in a team'.

Add in a few 'lessons learned' – what you did and how you might have done it better. You can also outline any voluntary work you have done for a charity, or any experience of paid work in an unrelated sector.

Preparing for other kinds of questions

Interviewers are also looking for someone who is likely to stay with the organisation and progress within it. Prepare to answer questions about your ambitions for the future.

You may also be asked to account for gaps in your career history, if you have any. Be positive and accentuate the learning or experience you gained during these periods.

Preparing your own questions

- **Do** ask technical questions about software, systems and structures and how things are done.
- **Do** ask about possibilities for training.
- **Don't** ask about salary unless you have been offered the job.

When you've prepared as much as this, you've got a good chance of success.

Good luck!